

# Understanding Perception of Team Ministry among Pastors and Elders in Volta Ghana Mission of Seventh-day Adventist Church

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## Abstract

Teams and teamwork are not new to the corporate world. Workers within business organizations have long used teams in some projects. Similarly, in Christian churches, the team ministry has been used for various church activities. However, there is limited information about the concept of team ministry among pastors and elders in the Volta Ghana Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This study aimed to explore and understand the perceptions of church pastors and elders regarding team ministry in the Volta Ghana Mission of Seventh-day Adventists. This qualitative study used a case study design involving three pastors and three elders from three districts in the Volta Ghana Mission. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the transcribed data. The perceptions of pastors and elders revolved around three themes. Based on the findings, the study recommends that collaboration approach, delegation, and motivation should be encouraged in the team ministry of the Volta Ghana Mission.

**Keywords:** Teamwork, Team ministry, Pastor, Elder, Seventh-day Adventist, Volta Ghana Mission

## Introduction

Team Ministry is not a new phenomenon in many Christian churches. Churches have been using teamwork in various religious activities. Team ministry is concerned with working together as partners in ministry (*Seventh-day Adventist Elder's Handbook*, 2013). Team effectiveness can be affected when members cannot work in harmony. Research has revealed that conflict between pastors and elders results in a lack of team ministry between them. This has affected evangelism and church growth (Razafimamonjy, 2010). A good working relationship aids in creating work relationships that can work even in conflict situations and tension (Eguizabal & Lawson, 2009). As indicated above, good relationships among team members are critical for team success. The absence of this might explain why some teams fail. Therefore, pastors and elders must demonstrate good working relationships for church members to emulate.

Moreover, Jones (2010) suggested that team ministry should be encouraged where team members can use their spiritual gifts for the progress of the church. Although teamwork has proven to be essential for many organizations,

some seem to lack this concept. In this regard, Shouvik and Mohammed (2018) observed that today, many people have forgotten the importance of teamwork in their lives in general and in the work environment in particular. However, all the religious principles have emphasized on how teamwork is essential to achieve the best results and to maintain every human's right equally by dividing the tasks and duties.

Critical issues regarding team ministry in God's church such as lack of collaboration and training need to be addressed. Understanding the perceptions of team ministry among pastors and elders will be helpful in this regard. Therefore, this study sought to understand the perceptions of team ministry among pastors and elders in the Volta Ghana Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The study also sought to shed light on how team ministries can be enhanced among the pastors and elders in this region.

The absence of team ministry among pastors and elders is a problem that needs to be addressed. For instance, the absence of team ministry between pastors and elders in two churches of eastern Reunion Island resulted in a decline in church growth (Razafimamonjy,

2010). Similarly, the apparent lack of a team ministry appears to have affected the progress of the Volta Ghana Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Many studies have been conducted on team building in organizations. Chamb and Masanja (2020) examined the effect of team-building processes on organizational performance at the Northern Tanzania Union Conference. Another study conducted in Turkey by Baharom et al. (2022) focused on determining the effects of team building on firm productivity. Khan and Wajidi (2019) also conducted research in Karachi, exploring the impact of team building on employee motivation. However, studies on team ministry in church settings are limited. Therefore, this study investigates the perception of team ministry among pastors and elders within the Volta Ghana Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The word pastor refers to a shepherd. It also designates a spiritual leader. According to Holman Bible dictionary (1991), in the New Testament, the Greek word for pastor is “poimen” which means pastor. Also, an elder is defined as a prominent member of both Jewish and early Christian communities (Holman Bible Dictionary, 1991). Elders played leadership roles in the early Christian Church (Acts 14:23).

### Review of Literature

A team is a group of people working together to achieve a common goal. In a ministerial sense, it means “pastor and board working together to provide oversight of spiritual growth and develop a clear direction and purpose for the ministry of the church” Daman,( 2019, p.1). Leaders work through teams to accomplish their tasks. Blackaby and Blackaby (2011) pointed out that even outstanding leaders cannot accomplish a task without working with others. They further stated that history’s most heralded leaders who learned how to maximize the talents and the sacrifices of others to multiply their efforts. Again, Gautama (2018) asserted that the success and failure of teamwork depend entirely on the team leader. This implies that team leaders play a significant role in team success. The following

sections provide a biblical foundation for team ministry, team ministry among pastors and elders in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, a synopsis of Ellen G. White’s perception of team ministry, team ministry in the church, benefits and challenges of teamwork, and the theoretical framework.

### Biblical Foundation of Team Ministry

Many examples of team ministries can be found in both the Old and the New Testaments of the Bible. In the Old Testament, Moses collaborated with God to lead the Israelites (Exodus. 3:12). Moses teamed up with God to deliver the Israelites from oppression (Exodus 3:7-10). Moses understood his incapability to complete the enormous task. He admitted to God for his inability to perform the assigned task (Exod. 4:10). God therefore asked him to team up with Aaron, his senior brother (Exod. 4: 14-16). Moreover, during the battle of the Israelites with the Amalekites, Aaron and Hur assisted Moses by holding up his hand (Exod. 17:8-13).

Jesus worked with teams and also encouraged team ministry among His disciples. Jesus chose twelve apostles to partner with Him in ministry (Matthew 10: 2-4). After training, the disciples were instructed to go to the Israelites and the entire sinful world. Jesus sent the seventy disciples and instructed them to go two by two (Luke 10:1). This is an example of team ministry. Apostle Paul was also a team player. He carried out God’s work with Barnabas and John Mark (Acts 13:13).

### Team Ministry among Pastors and Elders in Seventh-day Adventist Church

The Seventh-day Adventist Church encourages team ministry among pastors and elders. No guidelines of the Church discredit team ministry. The *Seventh-day Adventist Elder’s Manual* (2013) states that: Pastors and elders are partners in ministry. Church pastors are the team leaders, giving spiritual help and direction to the local church. Elders are their assistants in leadership. Pastors are appointed by and accountable to, the local conference or mission. Elders are

appointed by and accountable to the local congregation. (p.61).

### **Ellen G. White Perception of Team Ministry**

According to White (2002), the gospel work is not assigned only to pastors. White indicated that the Savior's commission to the disciples comprised every believer in Christ to the close of time. She further stated that it is a deadly error for a person to think that the task of soul-winning is only for a pastor. In this connection, she stated, "Not upon the ordained minister only rests the responsibility of going forth to fulfill this commission. Everyone who has received Christ is called to work for the salvation of his fellow men." The point here is that the task given to the church cannot be accomplished solely by pastors. Collaborative efforts are needed.

Moreover, White (2003, p.26) stipulated that "in the preparation of the sanctuary and in its furnishing, all the people were to co-operate. She mentioned that there was labor for the brain and hands. A great variety of material was required, and all were invited to contribute as their own hearts prompted." She further indicated that people were instructed regarding their cooperation with God and among themselves. This indicates that the church of God should work with team ministry. Regarding the team ministry with elders, White (1890) pointed out that the "Lord permitted Moses to choose for himself the most faithful and efficient men (elders) to share the responsibility with him."

### **Team Ministry in the Church**

Jumbuin (2020) argued that doing ministry together will enable the church to accomplish its mandate. He further notes that the absence of unity and a team ministry leads to declining membership growth in the church. Thus, team ministry is important in church leadership. Adkinson (2006) indicated that the building and leadership of a team should be taken seriously by church leaders to accomplish the church's mandate. He further stated that "there is an increasing need for church leaders to understand and apply sound organizational management

issues, including team leadership in order to lead their churches well" (p.3).

Moreover, Becker (2009) noted that the progress of a growing church is associated with teams of pastors who provide good leadership to the church. In this connection, (Nzenge et al., 2021) argued that an internal team environment is one of the most significant influences on the growth and effective functioning of an organization. The church organization can grow when leaders understand and promote the team ministry concept. Believers are expected to be united and to work as teams. For this matter, White (1948, p.240) stated that team spirit "brings spiritual health, elevation of thought, nobility of character, heavenly mindedness." She further stated "God's people are not to be in confusion, lacking order and harmony, consistency and beauty. The Lord is greatly dishonored when disunion confusion, lack of order and harmony, consistency and beauty. The Lord is greatly dishonored when disunion exists among His people. Those who love God and keep His commandments are not to draw apart, they are to press together." A team spirit reveals God's character, particularly when believers practice it. It is God's purpose for leaders to have a team spirit to accomplish their tasks and reflect God's character (Nyambane, 2013).

Furthermore, Krejcir (2020) argues that the church should strive to be effective and that the best way to do this is by following the precepts of scripture. He further indicated that the church can be organized by mobilizing people according to their spiritual gifts. This shows that church leaders should identify members' gifts and assign them duties according to their gifts. In this connection, Carter (2018), commenting on spiritual gifts, indicated that although members of the human body have different functions, they all have one purpose. Therefore, church members are expected to work together and minister to and with one another.

Similarly, Bjorke (2018) mentioned that each believer has a unique gift, and it is essential that they work together as one body. She further

noted that when a violin plays alone, it sounds beautiful, but this beauty is incomparable to what the entire orchestra can do collectively. This suggests that it is stunning for believers to work together as teams. For the team ministry to be effective, Watt (2014) indicated that church leadership adopts a collaborative and less competitive approach because it is a healthy approach to human interaction. He further stated that a good outcome results when leadership motivates others to work harmoniously to accomplish the Church's mission and goals. This finding indicates that competition among team members can negatively affect team functioning.

### **Benefits of Teamwork**

Shouvik and Mohammed (2018) contend that a lack of teamwork and plans may lead to failure, disappointment, low morale, and poor productivity in an organization. They further stated that workers do not accomplish the objectives and vision of an organization if they do not have a solid teamwork concept. Moreover, (Arinze et al., 2018, p.191) posit that "teamwork has a positive and significant impact on employee performance and this brings benefits in terms of higher productivity better organizational performance." They also indicate that teamwork contributes to a competitive advantage and increases the quantity and quality of products. This implies that teamwork benefits both employees and organizations in terms of performance and productivity.

Moreover, Alihev et al. (2015) observed that organizations cannot avoid teamwork activities if they are to succeed. According to them, teamwork is perceived by modern organizations as a central element in managing an organization. However, they also noted that teamwork can sometimes produce negative results owing to a lack of clear goals and vision, lack of promotion and reward, excessive control of team activities, lack of support from top management, and trust among team members. Nevertheless, a study conducted by Boakye (2015) in Ghana showed that teamwork is an efficient way to achieve organizational success.

It enhances the productivity, effectiveness, work efficiency, and performance of the entire organization. Teamwork improves organizational performance if the factors that militate against it are properly addressed. According to Shouvik and Mohammed (2018), teamwork helps create a healthy working environment with workable agendas, creative activities, positive strategies, and values. This indicates that working in a team can benefit team members to work effectively.

### **Barriers of Teamwork**

Teamwork is of great importance to organizations. However, they can also be dysfunctional. Kazemi et al. (2017) identified the barriers to teamwork. These include lack of motivation, lack of trust among team members, and cultural barriers. This indicates that a lack of motivation can discourage team members and cause them to withdraw. In addition, owing to globalization, cultural differences can exist among teams and, if not handled properly, can create conflict in teams. According to Raman (2019), conflict can arise because of negative stereotyping and ethnocentrism, causing cross-cultural conflict and inequality within an organization.

Bird (2015) also identified some challenges in the team ministry. These include the lack of team leadership skills and understanding, absence of godly character, overreliance on the lead pastor, and dysfunctional team communication. According to him, it is appropriate for team leaders to be trained and to acquire the necessary skills to lead a team. He added that a lack of this can challenge the team. However, Sohmen (2013) observed that poor leadership does not motivate a team to succeed. Sohmen also stated that strong leadership cannot hope to achieve success in an incompetent and unmotivated team. This suggests that the team leader and members play a role in the team's success.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The study used Hill's model of team leadership. According to Hill's model of team leadership, flexibility, problem-solving abilities, and collaboration are necessary for effective



leadership. Both internal and external actions influence leadership decisions to improve a team’s effectiveness. Internal leadership actions are further classified into task and relational leadership. In contrast, external leadership actions consist of networking, negotiating support, and assessing the sharing of information to boost team performance. This model provides a tool for helping leadership decision-making for both team leaders and team members. Northouse (2013) noted that the leader has a crucial responsibility to function in a way that will aid the team in accomplishing effectiveness. To achieve team goals, the leader needs to analyze internal and external situations and select and implement the appropriate behavior to ensure team effectiveness.

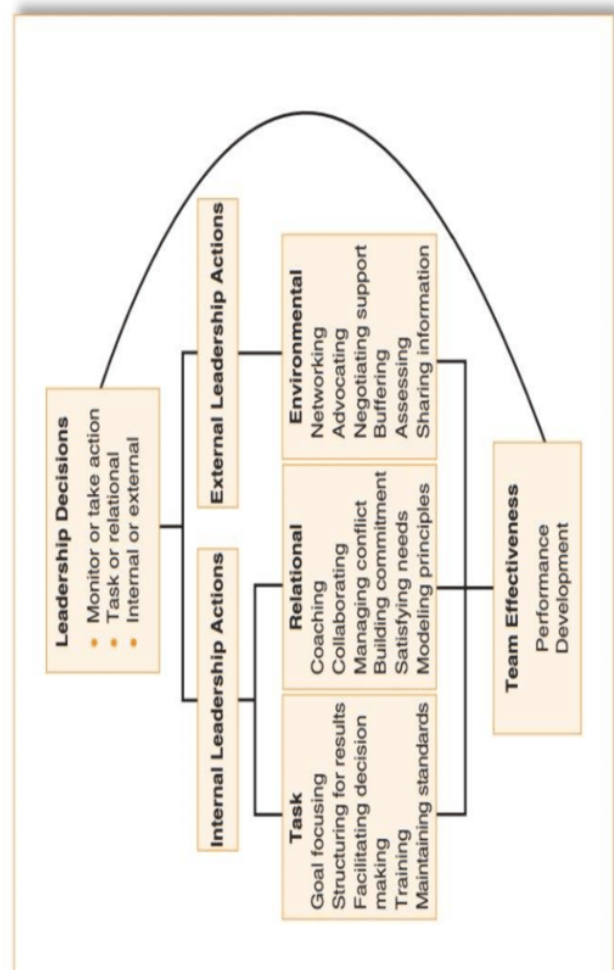
Leadership decisions at the top of Hill’s model include the major decisions that the team’s leadership must make when determining whether and how to improve team functioning. The first is whether it is appropriate to continue observing and monitoring the team, intervening in its activities, and taking action. The second decision involves the leader choosing whether task or relational intervention is required. The final decision has to do with whether the leader needs to intervene at an internal or external level. At the internal level, leaders may coach team members on their interpersonal skills. For example, if team members do not seem to listen to one another, the leader may intervene by leading team members in a listening exercise. At the external level, the leader may intervene by interacting and forming relationships with influential and respected individuals if team members are not well connected.

Several specific leadership actions that can be carried out internally or externally are listed in the middle section of Hill’s model. These actions include goal focusing, structuring for results, training, coaching, monitoring, managing conflict, building commitment, facilitating decision-making, networking, and others. In this regard, Northouse (2013) notes that teams will perform highly if they have clear goals, standards, and effective decision-making. Northouse (2013)

further indicates that teams will have a good relationship if they can manage conflicts, collaborate well, and build commitments. In addition, teams will be more productive if they are well-connected to and protected in their environment.

**Figure 1**

*Hill’s Model of Team Leadership*



**Source:** Adapted from *Leadership: Theory and Practice, Sixth Edition*, by Peter Northouse. Copyright © 2013, Sage.

**Research Questions**

This study aimed to explore the perceptions of pastors and elders regarding team ministry in the Volta Ghana Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Three research questions guided this study:

1. How do pastors and elders understand the concept of a team ministry?
2. How do pastors use team ministry to enhance God's work?
3. How can team ministry among pastors and elders be enhanced?

## Methods

### Research Design

This study explored the perceptions of team ministry among pastors and elders in the Volta Ghana Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The study adopted a qualitative method with a case study research design. "A case study is a methodological research approach used to generate an in-depth understanding of a contemporary issue or phenomenon in bounded system" (Coombs, 2022, p.2). A qualitative approach attempts to understand complex human behavior in the natural setting of participants (Silva et al., 2004). This approach provides a comprehensive view and understanding of the topic from the perspective of pastors and elders who have experienced team ministry.

### Participants

The population for this study was pastors and elders from some major church districts in the Volta Ghana Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The selection criteria were based on participants with relevant knowledge and experience in contributing to the study. Because this study aims to uncover pastors' and elders' perceptions of team ministry, it is important that the selection of the participants take into consideration the concept of maximum variability (Seidman, 2013). Three pastors and three elders were selected for this study. The pastors include a retired pastor, an ordained pastor and a licensed pastor. Also, the elders include an older elder, a senior elder and young elder. The total number of participants was six. To protect the confidentiality of the participants, their names were presented with pseudonyms throughout this research, where the retired pastor was referred to as *Participant 1*, the ordained

pastor was referred to as *Participant 2*, the licensed pastor was referred to as *Participant 3*, the older elder was referred to as *Participant 4*, the senior elder was referred to as *Participant 5*, and the young elder was referred to as *Participant 6*.

### Role of the Researcher

In qualitative research, thoughtfulness regarding the researcher's role is essential throughout the study. *Clandinin (2005) indicated that* because the researcher is the central instrument in all phases of the research process, from framing the question to sampling, gathering data, analyzing and interpreting data, and preparing research reports, it is crucial that the researcher be knowledgeable in the research area.

The researcher of the current study acknowledges that personal work experience can influence the interpretation of data. The researcher has worked with elders for many years as a district pastor and still currently serves as the Ministerial Secretary of Volta Ghana Mission of Seventh-day Adventists and works closely with pastors and elders. This sparked interest in this study.

In this study, measures were implemented to minimize or eradicate any personal bias, and only the participants' voices were reported. At the end of each interview, the researcher cross-checked the written report with the participants to confirm that their voices were actually what was contained in the study report and that they were not misrepresented. In addition, verbatim quotes were included to authenticate the study's findings.

### Setting of the Study

The Seventh-day Adventist® Church is a Christian global denomination that holds the Bible as the ultimate authority. The Church is organized in a representative form of church government with four levels of church structure: the local church, local conference/mission, union, and General Conference.

This study was conducted in the Volta Ghana Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. A local mission involves a group of churches within a specific geographic territory. Volta Ghana Mission was carved from the South Ghana Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 2016. This Mission is located in southern Ghana and shares a boundary with the Republic of Togo. The Mission had 14 districts at the time of the study. The participants were drawn from three major districts in the Mission.

### **Ethical Consideration**

Permission and authorization were sought from the leadership of the Volta Ghana Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Following this, all six participants were contacted, and the intention of how to access the data was explained to them for their consent. During the interviews, I asked the participants to obtain permission before recording the interviews. Measures were taken to preserve the confidentiality of the participants.

### **Data Collection**

The primary technique employed in this study for data collection was interviews. The interviews involved face-to-face dialogue between participants and the researcher. The interviews were conducted in November 2021. The researcher reminded the participants about the purpose of the interview, which aimed to understand the perceptions of team ministry among pastors and elders. An interview protocol was developed that contained key open-ended questions for starting the interviews. During the interviews, follow-up questions were asked as more information emerged. Participants' permission was sought for audio recordings.

### **Interview Questions**

During the interviews, the researcher asked the following questions:

1. Please describe team ministry based on your views.
2. Please share your team ministry experience with me between you and the pastors.
3. How does team ministry benefit the church?
4. Can you please share with me the challenges of team ministry among pastors and elders?
5. How can pastors encourage team ministry among pastors and elders?
6. How can elders enable team ministry among pastors and elders?

The questions were framed in this manner to provide flexibility and freedom to participants to explore the phenomenon in depth.

### **Data Analysis**

The analysis of the data was conducted simultaneously with the interview. Tape-recorded interviews were transcribed. The recordings were reviewed to search for regular recurring statements. To check for regularities, transcripts from the interviews were reviewed many times. The researcher highlights quotes and phrases that were significant in this study. The researcher moved back and forth among the transcripts until categories that were persistent but diverse emerged. After refining and integrating these categories, three themes emerged:

### **Findings**

Three themes emerged from the research data. From the interview, team ministry is understood as

Theme 1: Coming together to do God's work

Theme 2: Delegating authority

Theme 3: Motivation for pastors and elders

### **Theme 1: Coming together to do God's work**

The responses from three of the six participants indicated that team ministry is about coming together to perform God's work when each responded to the same question. When the researcher asked the participants to describe team ministry, Participant 5 stated that "team ministry

is a clergy together with elders and membership coming together in team and plan how to execute the work and come out with plans in order to carry out the work of God.” By sharing his teamwork experience, he indicated that “some of the clergy knew that they could not do the work alone, so they included the elders from the beginning.” He further indicated, “during evangelistic activities in one of the districts, the laity was going out for visitation while the pastor was preparing sermons during the daytime.” Also, Participant 6 reported that “Team ministry is about two or three people coming together to work for common objective to achieve common goal.” Moreover, Participant 4 stated that “team ministry is a means by which pastors and elders will work hand in hand for overall objective of the church as a whole.”

Similarly, the responses of Participants 1, 2, and 3, who were pastors, indicated that team ministry collaborates with others to enhance God’s course. For example, Participant 2 stated that “team ministry is a harmonious connection or collaboration between pastors, elders and church members to enhance the course of God.” Also, Participant 3 reported that “team ministry is a way of partnering with others so that the burden can be shared to complement one another.” Again, Participant 1, who is also a retired pastor, used cooperation and teamwork interchangeably. When narrating his team ministry experience, Participant 1 reported that “through cooperation with elders or teamwork we were able to open new churches.”

The responses from participants 1, 2, and 3, who represent the pastors, show that team ministry is about individuals combining their gifts to enhance God’s work. This suggests that the pastors perceived team ministry among pastors and elders as a situation where they combine their spiritual gifts to enhance God’s work. This seems to suggest that pastors need more collaboration from elders to enhance God’s work.

## **Theme 2: Delegating authority**

The responses from the participants indicated that team ministry is used when pastors delegate authority. When the researcher asked the participants to share their experiences about using team ministry, Participant 2 stated that “a pastor cannot be everywhere, so it is important to delegate authority to work in that direction.” Also, Participant 5 reported that “Adventist pastors are not many so pastors like to delegate elders to do many things for them.” Moreover, Participant 1 indicated that “I normally assign tasks to elders such as preaching appointments.” In this connection, Participant 4 reported that “when pastors delegate elders, it helps elders gain training on the job.”

The responses from the participants indicate that there are similarities among pastors and elders regarding the use of team ministry among pastors and elders. The participants’ overall responses suggest that delegation is vital to team ministry. Delegation involves the act of a leader or manager, and assigning tasks to team members in an organization. It also assigns responsibilities and authority. Pastors and elders are church leaders. However, as Paul appointed elders in every church they planted (Acts 14:23, 24), a pastor is responsible for delegating elders to doing God’s work. Lack of delegation can affect team success.

## **Theme 3: Motivation for Elders and Pastors**

Overall, the responses from the participants indicate that motivation for elders and pastors enhances the team ministry. For example, the researcher asked the participants, how can pastors encourage team ministry among pastors and elders? Participant 2 reported that “pastors should motivate elders.” He further stated that “one of the ways I motivate elders in my district is organizing elders’ appreciation day.” In response to how elders can encourage team ministry among pastors and elders, he said, “It is both sides. “Elders also need to recognize the pastor as a leader. Every organization has a leader. The elders need to show interest in the welfare of the pastor.” Participant 3 also stated that “pastors



should praise elders when work is done well.” Participant 6 also reported that “elders can also encourage team ministry by showing concern in the welfare of the pastor.” He gave an example that “pastor’s birthday can be celebrated.” He also noted that a lack of trust could set the pastor and the elder apart. He gave an example that “when we have taken decision together and the decision backfired, the pastor pushes the blame on me, next time I will not involve myself in decision making.” Again, Participant 5 indicated that lack of motivation and respect for elders can cause them to fold their arms. He further stated that “the work of an elder is a sacrificial work; we are not on salary so we need to be motivated and respected.”

There are similarities in the ways pastors and elders encourage team ministry. According to their responses, pastors and elders must motivate each other. However, it should be noted that the motivation for elders is highlighted more because they are doing voluntary work. It can be deduced from the responses that elders can withdraw from the work if they are not respected or motivated.

Table 1 presents the research questions, with their corresponding themes and evidence. The themes were used as headings for discussions of research evidence.

**Table 1**

*Question and Theme Table*

No.	Questions	Themes	Evidence
1	How do pastors and elders understand the concept of team ministry	Theme 1: Coming together to do God's work	Semi-Structured Interview. All the six participants
2	How do pastors use team ministry to do God's work?	Theme 2: Delegating authority	Semi-Structured interview All the six participants
3	How can team ministry among pastors and elders be enhanced?	Theme 3: Motivation for Elders and Pastors	Semi-Structured interview All the six participants

**Discussion**

As indicated in the previous section, team leadership model presented by Hill was adopted in this study. According to Hill’s model of team leadership, flexibility, problem-solving abilities, and collaboration are necessary for effective leadership. Both internal and external actions influence leadership decisions on team effectiveness. Internal leadership actions are further classified as task and relational leadership actions, while external leadership actions consist of networking, negotiating support, and assessing and sharing information to boost team performance. Three themes emerged from the data. The discussion in this section is closely tied to the three research questions and their corresponding themes.

### **Coming together to do God's Work**

Theme 1 under research question 1 showed that team ministry is about pastors, elders, and members coming together to do God's work. This seems to confirm the findings of Razafimamonjy (2010), who established that pastors and elders are expected to work together as gospel workers and church leaders of first-century Christians. The Lord called them to support one another as they accomplish the ministry. Moreover, the current findings appear to fit the definition of team ministry provided by Daman (2019). "A group of people coming together to achieve a common goal. In a ministerial way, it means "pastor and board working together to provide oversight of spiritual growth and develop a clear direction and purpose for the ministry of the church" (Daman, 2019, p.1). In addition, Alihev et al. (2015) stipulated that teams are made up of two or more people coming together to achieve a common goal, who are assigned to accomplish a task and who cooperate.

Similarly, the research shows that team ministry is about collaboration with others to enhance the course of God. This seems to fit the team leadership model presented by Hill who argues that flexibility, problem-solving abilities, and collaboration is necessary for effective team leadership. This also seems to confirm the findings of previous studies. Shouvik and Mohammed (2018) indicated that teamwork can be defined as a group of people working cooperatively to accomplish a task. The findings also seem to align with Becerra (2017), which established that promotion coaching, collaboration, conflict management, meeting people's needs, and principles modeling in team leadership.

Watt (2014) suggests that church leadership adopts a collaborative and less competitive approach because a collaborative and less competitive approach is a healthy approach to human interaction. He further stated that a good outcome results when leadership motivates others to work harmoniously to accomplish the Church's mission and goals.

### **Delegating Authority**

Theme 3 under research question 2 shows that team ministry is used when authority is delegated. The findings show that delegation is vital to team ministry because pastors cannot work alone. Therefore, pastors need to encourage team delegation of responsibility and authority. Blackaby and Blackaby (2011) opine that a leader who refuses to delegate limits the organization's productivity. In addition, the findings show that delegation helps elders gain trust in their jobs. This suggests that although some elders are well experienced, delegation can help them, especially young elders, develop their skills regarding the work. This finding aligns with Elder's Handbook, which established that pastors must train elders in a practical church setting by delegating responsibility and continuously communicating with them.

Moreover, Razafimamonjy (2010) commented that the leadership role in team building is to delegate but not to abdicate. According to him, people usually do not like leaders who give orders, "such leadership style produces frustration and may become a plea of team ministry. Instead of abdicating, he or she may delegate" (p. 40). In addition, this seems to align with the team leadership model presented by Hill who indicates actions that a team leader needs to perform, such as training, coaching, and monitoring. Delegation is an important element of team ministry. It aids in training team members and also enhances team performance.

### **Motivation for Elders and Pastors**

Team 3, under research question 3, showed that elders' motivation is crucial to enhance team ministry. This includes appreciation and recognition. Participants' responses suggest that a lack of appreciation and recognition by the elders can be a challenge for the team. This finding confirms that pastors and elders should motivate each other in the team (Seventh-day Adventist Elder's Handbook, 2013). Pastors must communicate regularly and encourage the elders. Moreover, elders are also expected to organize special programs for pastoral family

This also seems to fit the team leadership models presented by Hill who contends that team leaders need to make appropriate decisions to improve the team's functioning. The team leader may choose to intervene at the internal level using appreciation and recognition to enhance team functioning. In light of this, Eguizabal and Lawson (2009) proposed that the church must celebrate team accomplishments by creatively recognizing specific achievements. More importantly, "Christian leaders need to lead their teams to seek God's support as the ultimate source of power and authority. He approves and prospers the work in His kingdom and can say, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Although this finding aligns with the above-cited studies, it is important to note that the current finding highlights the motivation for elders because they are not being paid. In contrast to paid pastors, the elders engage in voluntary work. Hence, they can decide to withdraw from the work if they are not motivated.

### Conclusion

The concluding insights of this study find their basis in the research questions and their corresponding themes. The first research question concerned how pastors and elders understand the concept of team ministry. This study found that team ministry involves pastors, elders, and members coming together to perform God's work. Again, under research question one, the study discovered that team ministry is about collaborating with others to enhance the course of God. The second research question concerns how pastors use team ministry to conduct God's work. The study discovered that pastors use team ministry to delegate authority. The third research question is how can team ministry be enhanced among pastors and elders? The study found that team ministry among pastors and elders can be improved when pastors motivate elders. This can be achieved by recognition and appreciation. All the findings fit the theoretical framework of this study and earlier research. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that team ministry cannot work if pastors, elders and

members are unwilling to collaborate to work as a team. A lack of collaboration and delegation can cause the team ministry to fail. Moreover, the lack of recognition and appreciation of the elders can challenge team ministry.

### Recommendation

Team ministry is about pastors, elders, and members coming together to do God's work. Again, team ministry is about collaboration with others to enhance the course of God. These suggest that a conducive environment should be created so that pastors, elders, and entire members can come together to work as a team. Also, a collaborative approach should be adopted to discourage competitiveness among team members. Moreover, pastors need to delegate authority. This can enhance training and team performance. Furthermore, recognition and appreciation for elders should be encouraged. Elders also need to show concern for the welfare of pastors and their families.

This current study interviewed only six participants from three districts in the Volta Ghana Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Future research may involve more participants for more insights regarding team ministry.

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